

July 10, 2001

Dr. John J. DiIulio, Jr.  
Director, White House Office of  
Faith Based and Community Initiatives  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20502

Dear Dr. DiIulio:

We are deeply concerned about today's press reports that the Bush Administration may have agreed to issue an administrative legal action cutting back on the employment rights of minorities, including gays and lesbians, in exchange for obtaining the Salvation Army's political support for H.R. 7.

As a result, we request the White House provide us with the following information:

1. An itemization of all groups and persons that representatives of the Bush Administration have met with regarding charitable choice legislation, including representatives of the Salvation Army, along with the dates and a description of the substance and discussions of each meeting. Please include the names and titles of the Bush Administration representatives who participated in these meetings.
2. A description of any actual or potential promises or commitments the Administration or any representative within the Administration may have made to any groups or person in exchange for their support of charitable choice legislation or provisions permitting discrimination in employment.
3. A copy of any and all drafts of a reported administrative legal action or other regulation which would protect charities from state and local efforts to prevent discrimination against gays and lesbians in hiring and domestic-partner benefits, along with any legal memorandum or other material concerning such a possible action.

In addition, we would also like a copy of any and all communications within the White House or Executive Office of the President concerning charitable choice legislation or in connection with the

Dr. John J. DiIulio, Jr.  
Page Two  
July 10, 2001

above-listed meetings, promises or commitments and administrative legal action, including notes, e-mails, documents, memoranda, phone records and any other types of written, audio or electronic communication.

We also request that the White House urge the House Leadership to defer floor consideration of charitable choice legislation until we are in full receipt of the above information.

We recognize how important charitable choice legislation is to you personally and to the Administration. We also believe that religious organizations can and should have a strong and active role in dealing with our nation's social ills. However, we have long been concerned that proposals such as H.R. 7 are merely tools to permit increased discrimination and which would inappropriately entangle religion in our political affairs. This is why H.R. 7 is so strongly opposed by civil rights groups such as the NAACP and the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights.

As Members with a long time interest in civil rights matters, we would never want to see a bill purportedly designed to strengthen religion be used as an excuse to weaken our civil rights laws. It would be more objectionable yet if as part of the process of pushing this legislation, additional civil rights safeguards were forfeited in a "back room deal" outside of public scrutiny.

We are sure that the White House is as interested as we are in providing a prompt and full accounting and response to today's press accounts of a potential quid pro quo. As a result, we look forward to hearing from you by the end of this week so that we can discuss the best means of disseminating the information. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Mr. Conyers' Judiciary Committee staff at 225-6906.

Sincerely,

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John Conyers, Jr.  
Ranking Member  
Judiciary Committee

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Jerrold Nadler  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on the Constitution

cc: Hon. J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House  
Hon. Richard A. Gephardt, Minority Leader  
Hon. F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.  
Chairman, House Committee on the Judiciary